

**Minutes  
Newton Planning Commission  
September 23, 2003  
Council Chambers  
City Hall**

The regular meeting of the Newton Planning Commission was held at 7:30 p.m. on September 23, 2003 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

**Members**

**Present:** Brevard Arndt  
Kent Elliott  
Tony Jarrett  
Clinton Sigmon  
Tom Dixon  
Stan Winstead

**Members**

**Absent:** Gary Corne

**Staff**

**Present:** Glenn Pattishall, Planning Director

**Others:** None

**Chairman Arndt** called the meeting to order.

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**Item 2: Approval of Minutes August 26, 2003 Meeting**

**Chairman Arndt** asked for consideration of the minutes. With no changes, corrections, or additions, **Chairman Arndt** ruled that the minutes were approved as presented.

**Item 3: Old Business – Update on Drop-In Meeting on Area Specific Plan #1**

**Mr. Pattishall** stated that on September 18th a drop-in workshop was held in the Gantt Room at City Hall for the purpose of reviewing the maps and some of the preliminary findings and issues that had been developed for the Area Specific Plan #1. He distributed a printout of the drop-in workshop comments people had written on the sticky pads or other notes. He stated that staff would be accumulating these, that there were several work items that still needed to be done before the plan could be put together and that the staff would be working that over the next couple of months to put everything into final form for the Planning Commission to consider.

He reviewed the next step, which would be a meeting with UNCC professor David Walter on design ideas and concepts, reviewing septic tank failure map, mapping the issues and evaluating them, also meeting with a professor at UNCC on commercial and industrial development potential and would begin to formulate policy issues and alternatives as well as applicability of smart growth principles to the Plan.

**Kent Elliott** stated that the need for sewer and too many mobile homes were the two biggest issues that he heard from attendees at the meeting. **Mr. Winstead** said that he heard questions about a need for parks in the area. **Mr. Dixon** said that his concerns which he heard with the Loop, the fact the City is not installing a

sidewalk, and questioned Mr. Pattishall as to why the City was not installing a sidewalk. **Mr. Pattishall** explained that over 90% of the Loop project is outside the City limits and that the City had sidewalk needs within the City limits that needed to be met and that it would be some time before this area would be in the City limits plus the area does not serve a lot of residential development at this time, as it does in Conover and that the Council had made a decision to not install sidewalks at this time, but rather had asked the D.O.T. to do grading for future sidewalks.

#### **Item 4: New Business – Discussion of B-3 Parking Requirements**

**Mr. Pattishall** reviewed a September 23, 2003 memo from Alex Fulbright, Planner concerning the B-3 Zoning District parking regulations. **Mr. Pattishall** stated that the current policy in the B-3 district is not to require business to provide any parking. However, there is nothing in the ordinance that supports this policy. He stated that the staff felt that it needed to have some support in the ordinance and that it could be accomplished either by including a reference in the parking requirements that would state that the B-3 district is exempt from minimum parking requirements or that the City could establish an overlay district that would exempt the B-3 district from the minimum parking requirements. This would allow more flexibility and could extend past the B-3 area or could include other areas such as the north Newton area where common wall structures were located.

**Mr. Pattishall** reviewed the issues that had been studied as well as a survey of several other municipal parking requirements in their central business districts such as Hickory, Conover, Mooresville, Greensboro, Kernersville, and Salisbury. He also reviewed an excerpt from the American Planning Association's PAS Report on Parking Standards that touched on the issues related to parking in downtown. He said that any decision would impact the downtown as follows:

1. Is there a value added by not requiring minimum parking standards and the city providing all street parking in municipal lots?
2. Does it impact the private sector decision on whether to build or expand?
3. How important is parking in the decision of where one shops, dines or does business?
4. How would it impact the policies adopted in the 1988 land development plans for the central business district?

**Mr. Winstead** said that urban architecture should be pedestrian oriented. **Kent Elliott** questioned where would people park that would live in the downtown? Would they park in offstreets or in lots? He said he was concerned about parking for folks that lived downtown. He asked how many parking spaces were in the central business district and are being used?

**Mr. Dixon** questioned where was the municipal service district in relation to the central business district? He said he felt the people in the downtown needed to provide input on parking. He said he didn't think a public hearing was enough. He suggested getting input at the beginning, involve the DNDA to participate, and the Planning Commission needed to hear from the property owners and the DNDA as to whether there is a problem.

**Mr. Winstead** said they need to have direction to the people on where and how to park, if it is to be allowed or to be provided. He felt that our overlay cannot just be for the central business district. **Mr. Pattishall** stated that this is not an issue that really related to the people downtown. It had to do really more with need for the ordinance to be specific to guide staff and current and future business people making decisions about parking in the downtown. He explained how parking regulations could work if there were an overlay or some other way of being done.

**Mr. Arndt** discussed tear-downs and redevelopment on different size lots and whether parking should be provided for those.

**Mr. Winstead** felt the City should not require parking but should define how it is to be done, if it is chosen to be done by a developer, such as if you choose to do parking, here is how you would have to do it, and would include landscaping and possibly putting parking at the rear of buildings instead of at the front.

**Mr. Arndt** said he did not think that off-street parking should be required, either. He said he felt that where it was provided he agreed with Mr. Winstead there should be some standards.

**Mr. Elliott** said typically people view Main and College as storefront streets where parking is not allowed on the street and the City should be looking at the different types of streets as to how parking treatment should be approached, if indeed parking is going to be required or standards are going to be developed for voluntary parking. **Mr. Winstead** suggested that the square should have some type of protection along these lines.

**Mr. Pattishall** stated that staff would be continuing to review this and would be reporting back to the Planning Commission in the future with some thoughts and ideas for them to consider concerning downtown parking.

### **Water Supply- Watershed Protection Ordinance**

**Mr. Pattishall** stated that staff had submitted a draft ordinance to NCDENR for review and had gotten back a checklist of things that needed to be included rather than comments as to whether the City's ordinance was in compliance. He stated Mr. Fulbright was reviewing the checklist and would make the necessary changes for the draft ordinance and the staff would be presenting at the next meeting for the Planning Commission to review.

### **Item 5: Reports for August 2003**

**Mr. Pattishall** reviewed the August Permit, Code Enforcement, and Planners Report. He stated that Jason Abernathy's last day would be Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. He was going back to Concord. He stated that he was advertising now and hoped to hire someone to begin, hopefully by the first of November, if not sooner.

### **Item 6: Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn J. Pattishall/AICP  
Secretary

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